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**THEATRE: INTRODUCTION
AND TYPES***Notes*

What is theatre? What is theater art? How many types are there? Many such questions arise in our mind. When someone talks about theatre, we often associate it with acting performance. This is right because acting is at the center of theatre. You must be aware that Along with theatre, some other nouns are also used in the same context like drama, drama, theater, play, drama, metaphor etc. But do you know that there is some fundamental difference between these words? To know this, we need to It is very important to know and understand about theatre.

Often we choose the path of acting after being influenced by films and start it with theatre. There are also many well-known actors who have acted on stage for a long time and then ventured into films. Although acting on film and theater may seem similar on the surface, there are some technical differences between the two. To understand this, we need to understand the process of both film and theatre. In this lesson we will try to know and understand theatre. Here we will learn about the origin and development of theatre. Along with this, we will also discuss what was the ancient form of theatre? How a book like Natyashastra was composed in India. Emphasis will also be laid on how modern theater started and what are its characteristics.

**LEARNING OUTCOMES**

After studying this lesson, you-

- know the general introduction of Rangmanch (theatre);
- understand the origin and development of Rangmanch (theatre);

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- know about Natya Mandap;
- understand the nature of ancient Rangmanch (theatre);
- understand the Rangmanch (theatre) mentioned in Natyashastra;
- know the types of Rangmanch (theatre);
- know the general introduction of present Indian Rangmanch (theatre); and
- know about modern Rangmanch (theatre).

First of all let us talk about what is the meaning of the word theatre? Firstly, today we also use the word 'theatre' as a synonym for the English word theatre, which means scenic space. The word theater is also used for those places in the context of architecture. It is a theater where on one side the theatrical presentations are performed and on the other side there is seating arrangement for the audience. Thus, we use the word theater in relation to the auditorium built for the drama.

The second thing is that we often use the word theater for the performance of plays also. The word 'Theatre' is also used in the context of architecture for those places where on one hand theatrical performances are performed and on the other hand there is seating arrangement for the audience. In this way we use the word Rangmanch (theatre) in relation to an auditorium built for drama.

Today in the present era, we also see the usage of many more words related to Rangmanch (theatre) like Rangakarami (theater artist), Rangakalakara (theater actors), nataka, natya, drama, play etc. Every artist working on stage is called a Rangakarami (theater artist), whether he is an actor, director or someone working back stage. A play is something that a playwright prepares in the form of a script for performance. In English the word drama is used for this. When that script is performed it is called Natya. In English it is called play. Thus, at present when we say 'Rangamanch (theatre)' it means the art where play is presented in front of audience.

Thus, we can see that Rangmanch means two thing-

1. Rangmanch: Prekshagriha
2. Rangamanch: Performing art

Let us discuss on it in detail-

Rangamanch (Theatre): Prekshagriha (Auditorium)

The use of the word 'Ranga' is found at many places in Indian ancient literature. Acharya

Bharat has used the word 'Ranga' many times in 'Natyashastra'. Rangashirsha, Rangpitha, Rangbhoomi originated in Sanskrit due to the use of the word 'Ranga'. In this context, 'Ranga' has been given the meaning of entertainment, meeting hall, dance, singing and acting. It is true that the word 'Rangamanch' is not found in Acharya Bharat's Natyashastra nor in the later texts written on the subject of Natya (theatre).

In fact, during the British rule, the British built many auditoriums for their entertainment in which opera performances were held. These auditoriums were called theatres. Later, theater troupes started performing continuously in these auditoriums. Parsi theater also initially performed in the auditorium but later they started performing at different places in the country. Instead of a permanent auditorium they built temporary Rangamanch (theatres). In this way, the word 'Theatre', which was used frequently for auditorium, now came to be used as the noun 'Rangamanch' in Hindi for the entire performance of a Natya (theatrical) performance.

Rangamanch (Theatre): Performing Arts

Any play achieves perfection only on stage. Today the word 'Nataka (drama)' is also popular for the word 'Rangamanch' or 'theatre'. 'Nataka (drama)' is generally believed to be derived from the root 'Nat'. 'Nat' has also been considered to mean dancing, acting and imitation. 'Nat' also means actor. The word 'Natyam' is also derived from the same 'Nat' which means dancing, imitative portrayal, mime, gesture display and acting. From this, the meaning of the word 'Natakam' or drama is formed - a poetic composition which is acted.



Rangamanch (Theater) as we know it today is not limited to just the knowledge of the Prekshagriha (Auditorium). If we look at folk plays, we see many such plays which are performed in street corners and fairs among the society rather than in a well-equipped Prekshagriha (Auditorium). In such a situation, 'Rangamanch (theatre)' is



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directly related to performing arts. Rangamanch (Theater) means an art in which a drama is performed by a theater troupe which consists of playwright, actor, director, designer and backstage artists.

14.2 ORIGIN AND DEVELOPMENT OF RANGAMANCH (THEATER)

If theater is separated from dramatic presentation, perhaps only the article will be left, which is only text. Drama is definitely a genre of literature and theater gives it liveliness by providing it a stage. Perhaps this has been the reason why scholars have considered the complete stage of drama on stage. One-act actor Dr. Ramkumar Verma has also said - 'Drama is life and theater is body'. If there is no body then expression of life is not possible. The diverse colors of life combined in scenes in the form of events become alive, effective and tangible on stage.

How did theater begin? This is a very interesting question. The relationship between man and the art of theater is deeply connected to the story of the birth of creation. The most beautiful and artistic creation of creation is man. And while progressing with time, it is man who created theatre. Like it has given birth to art. It is inevitable that the tradition of theater did not start suddenly but has developed gradually with the development of human life. It is said in Natyashastra that theater is the integrated form of all arts. In such a situation, theater would have come to light only after all the arts, crafts etc. were born and developed somewhat. It doesn't have any message.

Divine Concept

If we take literature as the basis, then the story of the origin of drama comes to light in the Natyashastra written by Acharya Bharat in 500 BC. In which it is mentioned that Brahmaji has created Panchamveda i.e. Natya from the elements of the four Vedas. From this we come to know that drama originated after the composition of the Vedas. According to this story, when Satyayuga had passed and Tretayuga had started and the people had started following rural religion under the influence of lust and greed. Then gods like Indra requested Grandfather Brahmaji, O God! We want such a means of entertainment which is worth watching and listening to. Saying 'Evamastu' to the gods and bidding farewell to Indra, Brahmaji remembered the four Vedas. He composed Natyaveda by taking text from Rigveda, songs from Samaveda, acting from Yajurveda and rasa from Atharvaveda. After the origin of Natyaveda, Brahmaji asked Indra to use it, but Devraj Indra declared the gods are incapable of accepting, imbibing and using Natyaveda and requested for it to be given to a sage who is capable of using it.

Then Brahma ji asked Bharata Muni to use it. After getting permission from Brahmaji, Bharata Muni used it with his hundred sons. This is how drama originated.

Modern Concept

Acting must have started from there when man would have expressed his events in front of someone else. In this expression there was not a game of words but a game of body language. It is certain that body language was the first expressed language of man. If we take this as a basis, then the trend of acting had started in the Paleolithic period itself. Slowly spoken language emerged. Words were formed from sounds and literature began to be formed from words.

The origin of theater has a deep influence on the modern concept of Darwin's evolutionary theory and Freud's psychoanalysis.



In according to them, the point of origin of rangamanch (theater) has been traced with the development of human civilization. We know that by the Paleolithic period, human society had developed in the form of tribes. Hunting of wild animals was the main means of satisfying hunger. They used to hunt and cook and eat it with the entire tribe. This situation became the medium of collective expression and this is where art performance was born. In this period, human did not have language like today, they used to express themselves only through sounds and body language. Acting on stage may have originated on a day when members of the tribe sitting around the fire tried to express their experiences to each other. The entire incident of hunting would have been presented through acting. One person might have become a hunter and the other hunt animal. With this the concept of theater must have developed. Gradually this phenomenon of expression and performance evolved into hunting dances, tribal rituals. If we look at the dances performed in Bastar and other tribal areas even today, this gets confirmed.



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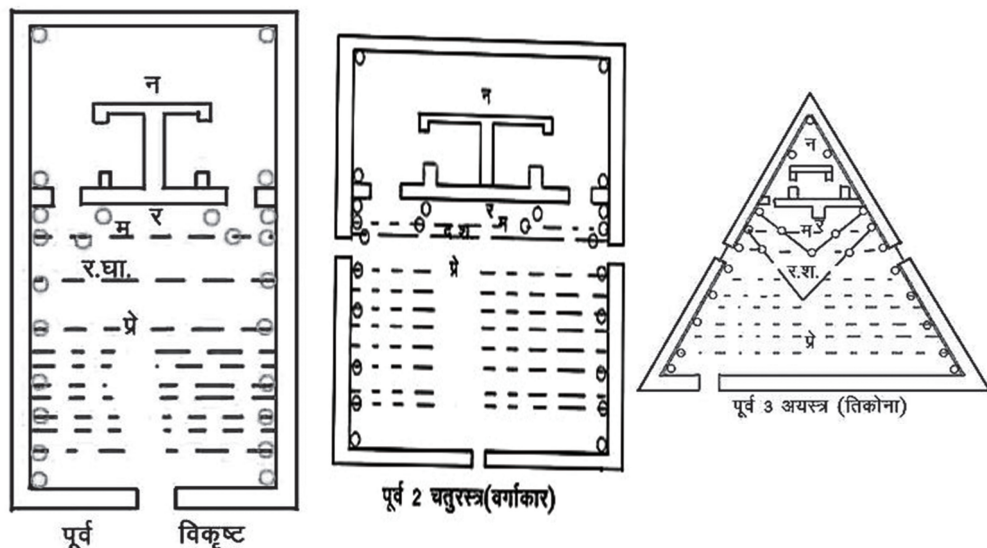
With time there was a huge change in human civilization. Farming became their main occupation in place of hunting and with this came the rise of folk arts. Rituals, dance, songs, painting, stories, sagas etc. developed. During this period, rangamanch (theater) came into existence as an independent art. In the book 'Natyashastra' we come to know about this independent theater art.

14.3 NATYA MANDAP

Natya Mandap is a place where plays are performed. It is planned in such a way that the theater troupe can perform its work conveniently and the audience can also sit in the audience gallery and watch and listen to the play properly. It is also often known as Prekshagriha (auditorium), Ntyagriha (theatre), auditorium and rangamanch (theater). Here we will learn about the ancient Indian rangamanch (theater) and the currently popular rangamanchs (theaters).

Prekshagrih (Auditorium) described in Natyashastra

Acting is performed by actors on stage. Keeping in mind the visibility and audibility for effective performance, Acharya Bharat has given a detailed description of the Prekshagriha (auditorium) used by actors for acting in the second chapter of 'Natyashastra'. Bharat has classified them on the basis of measurement into Jyeshtha (eldest), Madhdhyam (middle) and Kanishtha (inferior) and has mentioned the method and method of their construction. Selection of the stage for the rangamanch (theater), its measurement, planning of the stage and audience gallery, Bhoomi Pujan method etc. have been highlighted. Apart from this, in the third chapter he explains the method of Rangapujana (worship of theatre).



Acharya Bharat has discussed three types of Natyamandapa (theaters):

1. Vikrishta i.e. rectangular
2. Chaturastra means square shape
3. Trayastra means triangular

After that he has again made three distinctions between these three -

1. Jyeshtha (Eldest)
2. Madhdhyam (Medium)
3. Kanishtha (Inferior)

According to the Ntyashastra, following are types of Prekshagriha-

Vikrishta Jyeshtha	Chaturastra Jyeshtha	Trayastra Jyeshtha
Vikrishta Madhyayama	Chaturastra Madhyayama	Trayastra Madhyayama
Vikrishta Avara	Chaturastra Avara	Trayastra Avara

The rangamanch (theater) has been divided in the middle and half of it has been described as 'Prekshagrih (auditorium)' for the audience and the other half as 'Rangamandap'. There was a 'backstage' in the rear part of the Natya Mandap. In front of the backstage was 'Rangpeetha' and 'Rangshirsha'. There were doors to access the stage from the backstage. 'Mattavarini' were established on the right and left sides of the stage. The design of the audience gallery was made 'step-like' so that the audience could see and hear the scene clearly.

Natyagriha (theater) Popular in Modern Rangmanch (Theater)

Many experiments were also done in modern theater regarding theater pavilion. Nowadays many types of forums are in vogue. Along with modern theatre, the practice of open-air auditorium, proscenium theatre, studio theatre, Chakral theatre, drama without any stage at some street corners and experimental theater started. For example, Bhartendu Harishchandra's play 'Andher Nagari' has been performed with full equipment in the auditorium, on the Mukta Kashi stage and also among the people walking on the streets. Similarly, Badal Sarkar's play 'Juloos' was also staged more successfully in the grounds and on the streets besides theatres. The play 'Hori' was staged in Mukta Kashi by making real fields and huts etc. In the ruins of the old fort, plays like 'Andhaa Yuga', 'Tughlaq', 'Razia Sultan' etc. have been successfully staged on the Mukta Kashi



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stage equipped with lights, sounds and all the equipment. 'Andhaayug' was also successfully screened at the historical grounds of Firozshah Kotla.

proscenium theater

The most popular presentation area is proscenium theatre. In this traditional presentation area, the audience gallery is situated in front of a platform built at some height from the normal ground level, which is built behind a bay frame which is called proscenium frame or arch. The literal meaning of proscenium is a square or arched space from which viewing can be done. The wall that divides the designated seats of the spectators and the presentation area in the auditorium is called proscenium. This wall divides the auditorium into two parts-

The presentation area, stage side area and space and storage area for other technical equipment etc. at the back of the proscenium wall.

'Bay' The apron in front of the proscenium wall, seating area for spectators, etc.

For convenience of setting up the set, the presentation area is divided into several parts. The part near the observers is called down stage and the part away from the observers is called up stage. The center of the presentation area is called center stage and the side of the wing and back wall is called off stage. The right and left parts of the presentation area are also divided as per convenience.

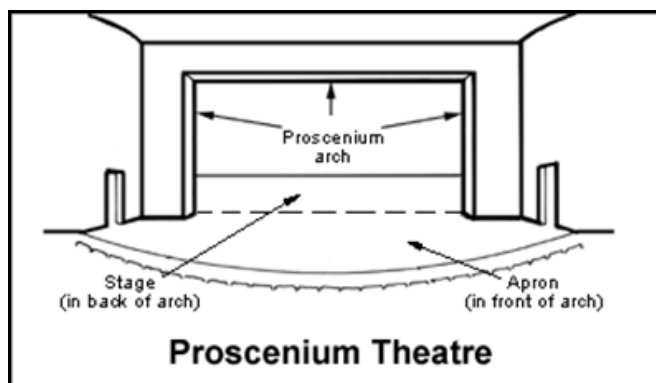
To test the sight lines, it is viewed from every possible location, especially -

From the seats on the edge of the back row

From the seats on both sides of the first row

From the seats on both sides of the first and last rows of the balcony.

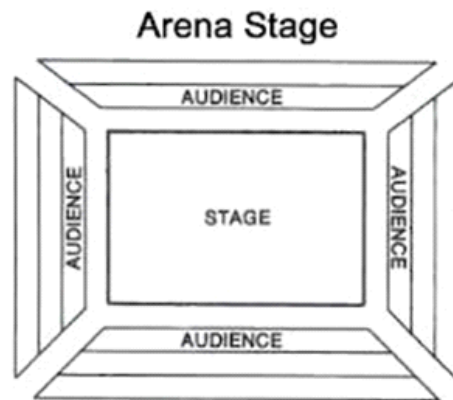
(D) From the main auditorium and balcony and from the seats in the middle row of the balcony.



Arena Theater

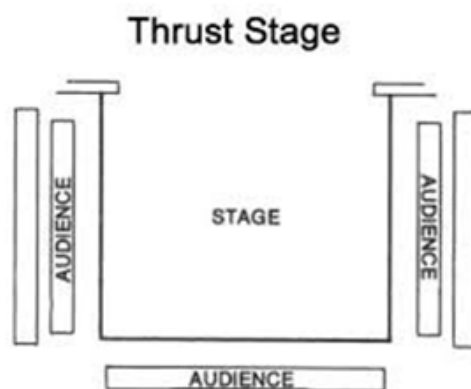
This type of theater is a circular stage in which the acting stage is mostly square or rectangular, built in the middle and the audience gallery is around it. The entry and exit of the actors takes place through the passage in the middle of the audience gallery. The acting area is sometimes situated at the level of the first row, and sometimes it is also made at a height of one or one and a half feet.

In this type of theatre, sets are not used during the performance. The entire drama is performed only through the medium of acting, which is watched by the spectators sitting all around.



Thrust Theater

This is also like Akhara theatre. The only difference is that it is surrounded on only three sides. Due to the shape of this stage, it is also called tongue-shaped or horseshoe-shaped stage. On the fourth hand, there are some simple types of visual decorations which provide the background of a suitable visual environment for the presentation.



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Other experimental performing areas

Theater is a continuous practice process due to which it keeps evolving continuously. Development means change. Playwrights experiment with the forms and styles of drama, actors try to create variety in the dramatic action. Inspired by the desire to create a stimulating place for the proper process of the dramatic action and audience, 'Sarvattam Manch' and 'Efforts are being made to develop the best theaters but nothing much has been done. The theaters built through this process can be classified into two categories.

Apron or free platform

This type of theater is mainly based on the development of apron in which attempts have been made to develop different situations of apron. In such theatres, the proscenium is free from the door and the square or rectangular form of the stage is surrounded by a curved cyclorama and the size of the apron becomes relatively larger. In some theaters, a joint-shaped roof has also been made for the apron and the main stage.

Muktakashi Manch (open air theatre)

It is considered most suitable for experimenting with new vision, but if we look carefully, the basis of its development can be seen in Greek and Roman building architecture. Some theaters were developed on the banks of lakes and rivers in which water flow was also used for scenery.



Apart from these types, at present the influence of experimental theater is also gradually increasing. Emphasis is being laid on using any space as per requirement for demonstration. Even without any decorations, plays are being presented on stage with mere acting.

As we learned earlier in the prevalent divine origin and modern concept regarding the origin of rangamanch (theatre), how the seeds of the emergence of art have been discovered along with the prehistoric civilization of human. Is theater in its primitive form an independent art? Came into existence in the form of? Probably not. Theater came into its full form much later. Now the question arises that what was the form of ancient rangamanch (theatre)? It can be known and understood with scientific thinking. To understand this, the only basis is our tribal arts. Yes, we can imagine ancient theater through dance, music and paintings prevalent in various tribal civilizations of the world. Here we are going to discuss some special points so that you can understand this.



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Spontaneous origin of Rang Manch

Imagine the time when primitive human used to live in caves and to satisfy their hunger, they used to go out of the caves and hunt. they made weapons for hunting from stones, wood and animal bones. With these weapons they could hunt easily. Time passed slowly and now they came out of the cave and started living in a group. They built their own hut in the forests and started living with their family. A particular group of the group, which was young, would go hunting and the elders and children of the clan would satisfy their hunger with the prey they brought. Before going hunting they would perform a victory ritual. To avoid the attention of animals, they used their 'skins' and 'masks'. To make children proficient in hunting and for their own entertainment, they used to perform hunting dances. We find many such rock paintings in the rock cave of Bhimbetka which confirm this fact. The prevalent hunting dance can be seen even today in areas like Bastar. It is possible that theater might have spontaneously originated in this environment, whose form might have been dance-oriented.



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Imagine that one day a hunting party would have hunted a giant animal. Many hunters may have suffered casualties while hunting. This incident must have been surprising. Hunting parties must have come to the tribe with that animal. When all the members of the tribe would have been sitting around the fire while the animal was being cooked, someone from the tribe might have expressed a desire to know about that incident out of curiosity. The person from the hunting party would have narrated the entire story to the tribe by acting out that incident. One person would have become a hunter and the other an animal. This is how the art of acting must have been born. Out of excitement, some people may have created rhythm by playing on wood, bone, stone etc. The actor turned hunter must have acted while dancing to that beat. This must have been such an unexpected performance that would have thrilled the audience.

Imitation

Aristotle has called theater the 'art of imitation'. Imitation is a natural quality of human nature. When a human being is born, he learns by seeing and hearing the environment around him. Primitive humans must have also observed the environment around them, imitated animals and behaved like them. They must have enjoyed this work. The story of 'Hunting' which we mentioned above, related to the beginning of theatre, was also born out of this feeling of imitation.

Religious Sentiment

Whenever human struggles with the struggles of life and wishes to progress further, they turn towards God. Along with this, they express their religious sentiments through dance, music etc. Theater also spontaneously becomes the main medium of this expression. Similarly, the primitive man also bowed his head before the natural forces. The path of rituals was adopted to wish for victory, to feel security, to appease the wrath of nature etc. Rituals like worship, dance, sacrifice, magic etc. originated in primitive society and priests who performed them came into existence. To please their deity, group dances were also performed in these religious rituals. If we look at tribal dances, the 'Baiga' character found in them indicates this. Later, this feeling became the basis of the plot for theater also.

Agriculture

Human civilization developed and with human came out of the forests and came to the plains. They learned to produce crops by farming. As the importance of agriculture started increasing in their life, they developed dance and song festivals related to it. They started celebrating even when the seasons changed. Even today we can see

dance festivals performed at the time of sowing and harvesting of crops. In fact, this was the period of the rise of the people. Even today we can see this festive spirit. 'Hareli' in Chhattisgarh and 'Nuvakhai' in Orissa is one such festival which is celebrated at the time of sowing and harvesting of crops.

In this way we see two forms of ancient theatre-Primitive theater and folk theatre.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 14.1

1. What do you understand by theatre?
2. When was Natyashastra composed?
3. Who has composed Natyashastra?
4. How many types of Prekshagriha (auditoriums) have been mentioned in Natyashastra?
5. What are the main components of the Prekshagriha (auditoriums)?
6. Which plays were performed in the Old Fort of Delhi?
7. What is the specialty of modern Prekshagriha (auditoriums)?
8. Which concepts of theatrical production are prevalent?
9. Who called theater the 'Art of Imitation'?
10. What is the role of imitation in ancient theatre?
11. What is the contribution of religious sentiment in the development of theatre?
12. What was the nature of ancient theatre?
13. In how many categories was the ancient theater divided?

14.5 RANGAMANCH (THEATER) MENTIONED IN NATYASHASTRA

When society was formed, expression also started. Mental disorders like happiness, sadness, jealousy, deceit and fraud also arose. Collective joy gave birth to festive events and people started dancing, singing and acting. These traditions continued from generation to generation for centuries. Even today, the tribal arts prevalent in the country- dance, songs, music, drama- bear the symbols of these traditions.



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The creation of Natyashastra is an important event in the Indian rangamanch (theater) tradition. The proper form of the theatrical tradition of several thousand years ago has been written in this text. This is a text which is very practical for actors and theater people even today.

History-Puranas, Vedas, Upanishads, epics and other literatures and archaeological evidence clearly indicate that the art of theater was fully developed many centuries before Christ. Castes like Yaksha, Kinnar, Gandharva, Nat, Nartak, Suta, Magadha, Granthik, Charan, Kushilava etc. played an important role in shaping this art. These castes cherished the dramatic performances of singing, playing, dancing, story-telling and story-performing from generation to generation. The rich, attractive and socially prestigious art of this theatrical performance inspired the sages, monks and acharyas to give it the form of a scripture.

In fact, Natyashastra is not only the art of drama but also a text discussing many other arts like singing, playing and dancing. In this scripture popularly known as 'Panchamveda', Acharya Bharat himself says about its importance -

**'Na tachchhastram na tachchhilapam na sa vidya na sa kala,
Na tatkarman yogauhsau natyehsmin yanna drishyate.'**

In fact, such a rich and prosperous theater tradition was compiled in it which later became the basis of performance in Indian theater for thousands of years. Acharya Bharat has thrown light in detail on the supplementary elements of acting like Rangamandap, Abhinaya-Aangika, Vachika, Aharika and Sattvika, Vritti, Pravritti, Rasa, Atodya, Dharuvagan, Siddha, character nature, Gaan etc.

It is possible to begin the process of reflection on any art form only when that form is fully developed and its tradition is complete. It is only after this completion that any scripture is created. In this way, two important streams- the performance tradition and the creation of texts based on them, became popular. The tradition of performance was moving forward without any hindrance, but the creation of Natyashastra made the thinking on them even more powerful. As a result, while on one hand Sanskrit plays were written and performed, on the other hand, taking Natyashastra as the basis, there was reflection on the contemporary theater tradition and many texts, commentaries and tikas were written.

14.6 TYPES OF RANGAMANCH (THEATER)

Famous scholar Nemichand Jain has said in the speech given on the topic 'Indian

Color Tradition' that 'It is true that our information about the initial period is very less. Still, it can be said without any hesitation that like other cultures, dramatic work in our country also started with primitive rituals or ritualistic dances, festivals etc. In fact, theater like situations and actions were present in the yagyas and rituals prevalent in the Vedic era. Later, after the inclusion of singing of Javanese stories of ancestors and great men of the community etc., all the demands for the rise of the theatrical form started being fulfilled. For example, in 'Ramayana' written by Valmiki, there is mention of drama, dancer, singer, Kushilava etc.

It is certain that theater in India did not start suddenly but gradually with the development of human civilization. In fact, the origin of drama is the result of the continuously running tradition of song, music, dance and primitive rituals. By describing its complete form in the Natyashastra, Acharya Bharat taught the use of theater to the coming generations.

India is a country of diversity. People of many castes, religions, languages and cultures live here. This is the reason why we see various forms of arts like dance, song, music etc. If we discuss the types of Indian theatre, we come to know that Indian theater has a great tradition of its own which is full of diversity.

(I) According to chronology the following types of theater are visible-

❖ **Sanskrit Rangamanch (Theater)**

As we have discussed the rangamanch (theater) described in Natyashastra earlier. In this text we find discussion of ten types of Rupakas - Natak, Prakarana, Bhaana, Anka, Prahasana, Veethi, Ihamriga, Vyoga, Samavkara and Dima. There is variation in these types on the basis of Vastu, Neta, Rasa. Along with this, Acharya Bharat also discusses 18 Uprupakas in Natyashastra. These types of Sanskrit theater were prevalent till the ninth century.

❖ **Folk Rangamanch (Theater)**

After the decline of Sanskrit theatre, we find the prevalence of folk plays. These folk theaters are divided into the following categories-

1. **Temple Dependent-** The folk theater which was performed in the sanctum sanctorum of temples. Like- Kudiattam, Ankiya Bhaona etc.
2. **Leela Natya-** The folk drama which was based on the Leelas of Ram and



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Krishna. Such as Ramleela, Raasleela.

3. **Social Drama** - Under this category come those folk dramas whose story is social. Such as mime, drama, dance etc.

- ❖ **Parsi Rangamanch (Theater)**

Parsi theater, which started from Bombay, made Calcutta and Delhi its centre. In the beginning, Parsi theater was without resources but gradually it gathered the necessary resources. These theater companies used to have equipment to produce amazing special effects. Through these, gods were shown flying in the air, heroes were shown jumping from the palace wall into the river, fairies were shown descending from the sky. This technique of creating the effect amazed the audience. People used to go with tickets to see these fascinating effects. This was a different feeling for the Indian audience.

Directors, playwrights, actors, designers etc. were hired in Parsi drama companies on salary. Female characters were played by male actors only. Later, seeing its popularity, dancers and village brides also started participating. In the early period, these companies presented Shakespeare's plays in English and Gujarati languages. Later Hindustani language mixed with Hindi, Urdu and Persian started being used. There used to be poetry in his dialogues and agility due to his strong work ethic. Comedy stories were also employed in plays. Plays were divided into numbers.

- ❖ **Modern Rangamanch (Theater)**

The era of modern theater is visible from the second half of the nineteenth century. In which the subjects of the plays were related to the common man and along with this, realistic, unrealistic and experimental methods of performance started being used.

(II). If we look at the basis of presentation style, theater can be classified into the following types-

- ❖ **Dance Oriented Rangamanch (Theater)**

It is a type of theater in which the prerequisite for being an actor is that they are good actors. Generally, we can understand this by watching folk dramas like Kudiattam, Terukuttu, Yakshagana etc. Also, the dance drama

performed by the dancers also comes in this category.

❖ **Music Oriented Rangamanch (Theater)**

This style of theater presentation includes that theater in which the delivery of dialogues by the actors is often lyrical. It is also called musical drama. For example, we can see Nautanki drama.

❖ **Street Style**

This style of theater came into existence in the middle of the twentieth century. In this style, plays are often presented in streets, corners and intersections. Its main objective is to make people aware. Safdar Hazmi is a famous artist of this style.

❖ **Radio Drama**

This is a presentation style of theater in which special emphasis is given to verbal acting rather than physical acting. In this, the actor brings the characters alive in the imagination of the audience through his recitation and background music. The play 'Andhayug' was written by Dharamveer Bharti for this genre.

❖ **Mute/Silent Drama**

Mute drama i.e. mime is a presentation style of theater in which the actor gives special emphasis on physical actions rather than reciting. There are no dialogues in this, only the story is presented on the stage through sounds, music and physical acting.

❖ **Single**

In this presentation style only one actor performs on the stage. He himself plays the role of different characters.

❖ **Experimental Rangamanch (Theater)**

In this style of theatre, no single method is used but experiments are done with the elements of theatre. Sometimes regarding the stage and sometimes regarding the composition. Sometimes about acting and sometimes about design. For example- Ibrahim Alkazi did many experiments regarding the



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stage. In 'Kahani Ka Rangmanch', Prof. Devendraraj Ankur rejected other elements of theater while Bansi Kaul experimented with design and acting in clownish style. The experiment 'Third Theater' conducted by Badal Sarkar is also notable among experimental theatre.

**INTEXT QUESTIONS 14.2**

1. Natyashastra is a text of which nature?
2. Which castes developed theater before Natyashastra?
3. Which components of theater are discussed in Natyashastra?
4. Which schools of drama became popular?
5. What is dance drama?
6. What type of theater is Nautanki?

14.7 MODERN RANGAMANCH (THEATER)

The environment of modern theater in India was being created in the beginning of the twentieth century. Literature imbued with national sentiment was being written. Continuous efforts were being made to strengthen this spirit in Indian theatre. This point is also confirmed by the study of regional theatre. Blind imitation of Western civilization and later special love for the indigenous spirit inspired by Western imitation is indicative of this.

The freedom struggle had a special impact on the history of Indian theatre. When the whole of India was moving towards achieving Indian independence during 1940-47, the Bharatiya Jana Natya Sangh was established in 1943. This institution played an important role in the development of theatre. During this period, famous Parsi theater and film actor Prithviraj Kapur formed his traveling troupe named Prithvi Theaters in 1944-60 and controlled the hyperdramatic element of Parsi by making innovative use of Parsi theater style in realistic style reformist plays.

In the fifth decade of the twentieth century, the seminars and festivals organized by the Kendriya Sangeet Natak Akademy in 1954 prepared the stage for theatre, and the performances of the National School of Drama in 1959 gave impetus to Hindi theatre.

Theater workers trained from this institution went to different states of the country and formed their own troupes and activated theater in remote areas by organizing theater camps. Troupes like 'Theater Unit (1954-Bombay)', 'Anamika (1955- Calcutta)', 'Naya Theater (1959-Delhi)', made unprecedented contribution to theater with modern theater approach.

Habib Tanveer's 'Agra Bazaar' also became famous in this decade. Its performances brought the concept of total theater into discussion and highlighted the relevance of traditional theatrical forms. In the same decade, Satyadev Dubey did *Andhayug* (1962) for the theater unit. Classic productions like 'Ashadh Ka Ek Din (1964), *Suno Janmejay* (1966), *Shuturmurg* (1968), *Aadha Adhure* (1969), and *Indrajit* (1970) were produced. For Anamika, the productions of 'Laharon Ke Rajhans' (1964), 'Shuturmurg' (1967) and 'Ev Indrajit' (1968) directed by Shyamanand Jalan were popular.

Indian theater had come into its clear shape in the seventies. During this period, the best original plays of India and abroad and translations of various linguistic plays of India were presented. There was unprecedented progress in the field of playwriting. The newness that this brought about in the level, content and style of playwriting proved to be very important for theatre.

In the 80s, amateur theater became active across India. The trend of experimentation in color styles also started. Sanskrit plays started being played in a new style. The inclination of playwrights and directors of Indian theater moved towards traditional theatrical forms. Demand for scripts for staging increased. To fulfill this demand, theater turned towards other genres of literature. Directors were attracted towards adaptations of novels. Plays of other Indian languages were played more in Hindi than in their own languages. In the same decade, a tendency to learn folk theater from other regions also arose. Directors of other languages played Sanskrit and Hindi plays at the request of troupes from Hindi speaking regions. In these Hindi theater productions, he used the styles and elements of his state very well. K.N.Panikkar, Ratan Thiyam, Fritz Wennewitz became a part of Hindi theatre. On one hand, apart from playwrights like Dharmveer Bharti, Jagdishchandra Mathur, Mohan Rakesh, Lakshminarayan Lal, Gyandev Agnihotri, B.M. Shah, Surendra Verma, Mudrarakshas, Mani Madhukar, Shankar Shesh, Sarveshwardayal Saxena, Bhisham Sahni, Asghar Wajahat, Rajesh Joshi, New playwrights like Mrinal Pandey, Nand Kishore Acharya, Rameshwar Prem etc. showed their theater ability, on the other hand, Vijay Tendulkar, Badal Sarkar, Mohit Chatterjee, Manoj Mitra, Devashish Majumdar, Chandrashekhar Kambar, Govind Deshpande, Mahesh Elkunchwar, Satish Alekar. Adi's plays also remained



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popular. After the eighties, Hindi troupes started disintegrating and theater artists started migrating towards cinema and television.

The nineties were the time to learn folk theater elements from other states. What was important in this decade was that Hindi theater artists started emphasizing on learning the color elements of other states. For this, famous directors like K.N. Panikkar (Malayalam), Ratam Thiyam (Manipuri), Kanhai Lal (Manipuri), Vijay Mehta (Marathi), Rudrapratap Sen Gupta (Bengali) started being called. In this decade mainly story theatre, use of traditional theater forms remained in discussion. These experiments provided a new language to theatre. At present, Indian theater is dynamic with its diverse styles. Not only commercial but also non-commercial theater is continuously enriching theatre.

If we look at the present scenario of Indian theatre, the tradition of new experiments is going on. New experiments taking place across the country, their performances in various national theater festivals, theater training centers established in various states, trainees continuously experimenting after training, Indian Government's schemes promoting theatre, etc. have created a favorable environment for theater today.



INTEXT QUESTIONS 14.3

1. When was the Bharatiya Jana Natya Sangh established?
2. Who founded Prithvi Theatre?
3. Write about the National School of Drama?
4. Who was the director of the play 'Agra Bazaar'?
5. Theater Unit is related to which city?



WHAT HAVE YOU LEARNT

- The general meaning of theater is a place where drama is presented. This noun is also used for theatrical presentation and its entire process.
- The oldest text of Indian theater is 'Natyashastra' which was composed by Acharya Bharat in 500 century BC.

- Natyashastra contains a complete description of Sanskrit theatre. This is the original text not only of theater but also of arts like dance, music etc.
- Information regarding ancient theater is available from the archaeological objects and art forms found. In this, the seeds of the origin of theater have been traced from prehistoric civilization. Primitive theater started with the qualities of expression and celebration in primitive human civilization.
- The second stage of primitive theater comes into existence with agricultural civilization. Where dance, song, music, story etc. develop.
- Among the types of Indian theatre, it is mainly classified into Sanskrit theatre, folk theatre, Parsi theater and modern theatre. Apart from this, there are many types of theater depending on the presentation style.
- Modern theater begins from the second half of the 19th century. Especially after independence, we see many creative experiments on theatre, in which not only the writing but also the performance shows development towards contemporary meanings based on traditional methods.



TERMINAL EXERCISE

1. What do you understand by theatre?
2. What is the role of Natyashastra in Indian theatre?
3. What do you know about primitive theatre?
4. What are the types of theatre?
5. Write a note on modern theatre?



ANSWERS TO INTEXT QUESTIONS

14.1

1. Theater refers to the art in which plays are presented on the stage.
2. 500 century BC
3. Acharya Bharata



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4. On the basis of size three- 1- Vikhrishta, 2- Chaturastra and 3- Tryastra. On the basis of magnitude, they were again divided into three - 1- Jyeshtha, 2- Madhdhyam and 3- Kanishtha.
5. Stage, Rangjkar, Nepathya, Mattavarini, Yavanika etc.
6. Andh Yuga
7. Construction of presentation venue according to the purpose of presentation, a new creation different from traditional auditoriums.
8. Divine and modern concept.
9. Aristotle
10. Scholars estimate that primitive man might have tried to imitate the nature around him by observing the animals living in them. Even in the story of Genesis itself, there is mention of imitating hunting while enacting the incident of hunting.
11. Religious sentiment has played a significant role in the development of theater because human, out of his fear and desire for a secure future, gave birth to the process of worship and in this prayer, they used dance, music and theatre.
12. The form of ancient theater was dance based.
13. Prehistoric and folk

14.2

1. Natyashastra is a text whose nature is completely experimental.
2. Yaksha, Kinnar, Gandharva, Nut, Dancer, Suta, Magadha, Granthik, Charan, Kujilav etc.
3. Acharya Bharat has thrown light in detail on the subjects like Rangmandap, Abhinaya - Angika, Vachika, Aharika and Sattvika, Vritti, Pravritti, Rasa, Atodya, Dharuvagaan, Siddhi, character nature, songs etc.
4. Tradition of writing Sanskrit drama and commentary texts